The Lemon Grove REVIEW

SPORTS WEEKLY EAST COUNTY

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Girls water polo season in first league-ending tournament

by Marv Rosen

This first year of girls varsity water polo has been, to quote one coach, "a logistic nightmare."

Although there are only six of the 10 high schools in the Grossmont District participating, many of the district's pools are shut down during the winter (on a rotating basis), leaving only Grossmont High School getting to practice and hold its meets at home.

For this, the inaugural season, Granite Hills uses the Grossmont pool, El Capitan and Valhalla use El Cajon Valley's pool and Monte Vista and Helix use the pool at Mount Miguel.

Neither El Cajon Valley nor Mount Miguel have teams competing this initial full varsity season as well as either of the Santee schools, Santana or West Hills.

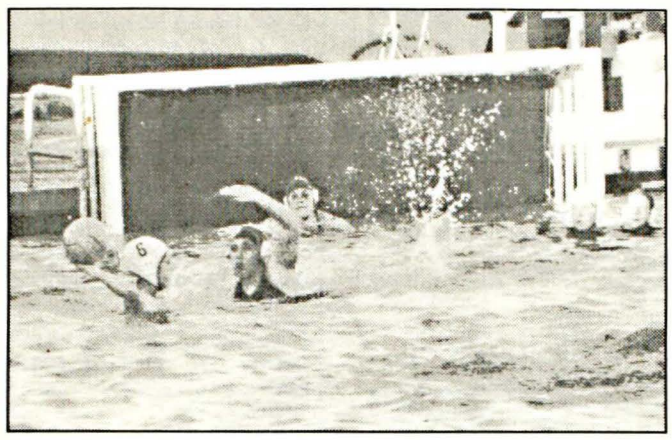
In addition to the logistics of having to carry their equipment back and forth, four of the coaches, Jim Sullivan at Helix, Sean Nollan at Grossmont, Shaun Kennard at Monte Vista and Kent Houston at Valhalla are "walk-ons."

Today, the first-ever league tournament will begin at 4 p.m. at El Cajon Valley High School with El Capitan meeting Helix, followed by top seeded Valhalla against Granite Hills. On Wednesday at Grossmont at 4:30 p.m., second seeded Grossmont takes on Helix followed by Granite Hills versus Monte Vista. On Thursday, back at ECV, at 4 p.m., the final first round matches will find El Cap against Grossmont at 4 p.m. then Valhalla against Monte Vista. On Friday, at Grossmont, the top team from Pool B meets the second place team from Pool A then A1 versus B2 in the semis

The tournament will finish with the finals at El Cajon Valley on Saturday. The two friday winners meet at 12:30 p.m., following games at 10 a.m. for fifth and sixth and at 11:15 for third and fourth.

With 14 teams out of 27 schools which play girls water polo making the CIF playoffs, as many as three Grossmont League teams could be playing.

Helix coach Sullivan, whose girls are having a tough time this first season, felt that although Valhalla is favored going in, with Grossmont seeded second, the tournament is wide open, and surprises may occur.



In front of Monte Vista goal, Helix varsity attacker (white cap) seeks opening to either shoot or pass as defender closes in to upset action. Monte Vista won water polo match on Jan. 27 in match played at Mount Miguel pool. *Photo by Marv Rosen*

Monte Vista coach Kennard, who also coaches the boys varsity, noted that the differences between the girls who have been playing club water polo and those who are novices is very noticeable.

He did feel that there should be an improvement throughout the league after the new players get a season of water combat. Both Sullivan and Kennard said that although it is quite a physical game, it is fairly tame compared to the boys at the prep level.

Kennard, who said his experience came from playing with Valhalla, the arch rival of Monte Vista, was happy with a large turnout, but that many girls were surprised how difficult the sport can be and the requirements of practices.

He currently carries about 32 swimmers on the varsity and JV squads. He had also coached at Patrick Henry and last year at Monte Vista as JV boys coach.

Sullivan has about 27 swimmers on his two squads. The former Helix competitor had club coaching experience prior to last year and, like most of the coaches in the league, is a walk-on, and not on the campus as a teacher.

Grossmont coach Nollan is a member of the highly rated UCSD varsity who was a prep All-American at Mira Costa High School in Orange County. He is quite enthusiastic about his girls. He also feels that this is a wide-open tournament, despite the lack of experience by his 28 girls on the varsity and JV squads.

Since he came on as coach only three weeks before the season, he has high praise for his school's administration and Athletic Director Frank Foggiano and for the help the other coaches in the league have provided.

One problem he has faced has been the almost unrealistic expectation by the students at his school that the girls can match the boys 1996 CIF Water Polo championship.

Nollan noted that the girls on the team really listen to his coaching and want to be like the boys team, swimming their hearts out at every meet. He also feels that the quality of the teams will take a jump next season.

A major problem that is faced by all the schools is a lack of available funds for the sport which may hinder its future growth. The enthusiasm of the girls and coaches is there, despite that.

Lemon Grove's Williamson joins honored former Aztec baseball legends to have number retired

by Joe Naiman

Mark Williamson, whose organized baseball career started with the Lemon Grove Little League, joined an elite group of former San Diego State University baseball players Jan. 18 when his former Aztecs uniform number was retired.

Williamson, who pitched for the Aztecs in 1980 and 1981, returned to Smith Field the following afternoon for the alumni game. He took the mound as a starter and threw two scoreless innings before playing second base for the first time in his career. The game between the current Aztecs and the alumni was the first for Williamson as an alumni.

Williamson's family, as well as the other fans in attendance, were forced to watch the game from the right field bleachers due to the construction of permanent seats at the college diamond. Williams remarked that it's nice to see the ballpark finally taking shape.

Williamson felt that the progress on the new ballpark fulfilled a longtime wish of Aztecs coach Jim Dietz. "I haven't seen him this happy in a long time."

Williamson was born in 1959 in Corpus Christi, Texas where his father, Wesley, was stationed in the Navy. He is the youngest of the four children, all boys, of Wesley and Adena.

The family soon returned to Lemon Grove with their newest addition, and after Wesley retired from the Navy in August 1961 the family was in Lemon Grove to stay.

Phil Williamson, who is four years older than Mark, attended United States International University on a baseball scholarship, played shortstop at Grossmont college and was a pitcher and shortstop at USIU.

One of Phil's teammates in high school was Ted Updike, who became his agent.

Mark Williamson played Little League, Colt League and mostly shortstop at Mount Miguel High School with a bit of pitching responsibility.

The 6'0" Williamson, who weighed 155 pounds when he entered the majors, felt he was too small to play any other sports.

After graduating from Mount Miguel in 1977, Williamson enrolled at Grossmont Community College. He didn't play baseball in his first year at Grossmont, but tried out for the 1979 team as a pitcher, noting that Grossmont had too many shortstops for him to have a chance of making the team at that position.

Williamson was ignored by the coaches of four-year collegiate teams, with the exception of Dietz. The combination of a scholarship and the chance to play locally was enough to send Williamson to San Diego State.

Williamson's teammates included future major leaguers Bobby Meacham, Tony Gwynn and Al Newman. Although Williamson had a scholarship, he was expected to help with the field maintenance.

"This is all part of going to school here. You do the grunt work. You move dirt, you move sod, you do everything," he said. Williamson also helped build the batting cages.

As a junior his earned run average of 1.69 was the ninth best in the National Collegiate Athletic Association, and his two-year ERA was a lean 1.72. He had a won-loss record of 18-10 with 17 saves as an Aztec.

Williamson said that his most memorable moment at San Diego State was a five-game series against Hawaii. The Aztecs won enough games against the Rainbows to win the division that year.

It was during that year that Williamson knew he had a professional career ahead of him.

"I knew I was going to get drafted. You always feel you can one day probably pitch in the big leagues, but it was never really a dream of mine."

The Padres took him in the fourth round of the June 1982 draft and assigned him to their Class A farm team in Reno,

Continued on Page 3

East County High Schools

Sports Schedules

(as available)

Tuesday, Feb. 4 - Tuesday, Feb. 11

(check with schools for times)

Tuesday – Varsity Basketball: Boys (girls at opposing sites; JVs play preliminaries). Santana at El Capitan, West Hills at El Cajon Valley, Grossmont at Valhalla, Granite Hills at Helix, Mount Miguel at Monte Vista. Girls Water Polo league tournament at El Cajon Valley: El Capitan vs. Helix, Valhalla vs. Granite Hills.

Wednesday – Girls Water Polo league tournament at Grossmont: Grossmont vs. Helix, Granite Hills vs. Monte Vista.

Thursday – Wrestling: Valhalla at Helix, Granite Hills at Mount Miguel, Santana at El Cajon Valley, Grossmont at El Capitan, West Hills at Monte Vista. Girls Water Polo league tournament: at El Cajon Valley: El Capitan vs. Grossmont, Valhalla vs. Monte Vista.

Friday – Varsity Basketball: Boys (girls play preliminary at same sites, JVs earlier). Monte Vista at Granite Hills, Valhalla at Mount Miguel, El Cajon Valley at Santana, Grossmont at West Hills. Girls Water Polo league tournament at Grossmont: semi-finals.

Saturday – Girls Water Polo finals at El Cajon Valley (10, 11:15, 12:30).

Tuesday (2/11) – Varsity Basketball: Boys (girls at opposing sites; JVs play preliminaries). El Capitan at Santana, Grossmont at Santana, Helix at Monte Vista, Valhalla at Helix.

Sheriff's bike patrol at ready

Members of the Lemon Grove Sheriff's bicycle patrol show off their new vehicles at the city council meeting. *Photo by Cheryl Cohen*

PUBLIC NOTICE

SUMMONS-FAMILY LAW
CITACION JUDICIAL-
DERECHO DE FAMILIA

NOTICE TO RESPONDENT (Name): AVISO AL DEMANDADO (Nombre):
TIMOTHY WAYNE CLEVENGER

You are being sued. A usted le estan demandando.

PETITIONER'S NAME IS:
EL NOMBRE DEL DEMANDANTE ES:
CHRISTINA TUMARA KIMBER

CASE NUMBER: (Numero del Caso) **ED 96D010317**

You have **30 CALENDAR DAYS** after this Summons and Petition are served on you to file a Response (form 1282) at the court and serve a copy on the petitioner. A letter or phone call will not protect you.

If you do not file your Response on time, the court may make orders affecting your marriage, your property, and custody of your children. You may be ordered to pay support and attorney fees and costs. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the clerk for a fee waiver form.

If you want legal advice, contact a lawyer immediately.

Usted tiene **30 DIAS CALENDARIOS** después de recibir oficialmente esta citación judicial y petición, para completar y presentar su formulario de Respuesta (Response form 1282) ante la corte. Una carta o una llamada teléfonica no le ofrecerá protección.

Si usted no presenta su Respuesta a tiempo, la corte puede expedir órdenes que afecten su matrimonio, su propiedad y que ordenen que usted pague mantención, honorarios de abogado y las costas. Si no puede pagar las costas por la presentación de la demanda, pida al actuario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exoneración de las mismas (Waiver of Court Fees and Costs).

Si desea obtener cosejo legal, comuniquese de inmediato con un abogado.

NOTICE The restraining orders on the back are effective against both husband and wife until the petition is dismissed, a judgment is entered, or the court makes further orders. These orders are enforceable anywhere in California by any law enforcement officer who has received or seen a copy of them.

AVISO Las prohibiciones judiciales que aparecen al reverso de esta citación son efectivas para ambos cónyuges, tanto el esposo como la esposa, hasta que la petición sea rechazada, se dicte una decisión final o la corte expida instrucciones adicionales. Dichas prohibiciones pueden hacerse cumplir en cualquier parte de California por cualquier agente del orden público que las haya recibido o que haya visto una copia de ellas.

1. The name and address of the court is: (El nombre y dirección de la corte es)

ORANGE COUNTY SUPERIOR COURT
Family Law
341 The City Drive
Orange, CA 92613

2. The name, address, and telepone number of petitioner's attorney, or petitioner without an attorney, is:
(El nombre, la dirección y el numero de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es)

THOMAS GEORGE KEY
13522 Newport Avenue, 2nd Floor
Tustin, CA 92780

TELEPHONE NUMBER:
714-838-3974

Date (Fecha) OCT 23, 1996

ALAN SLATER,CLERK (Actuario), by J. BECK, Deputy

NOTICE TO THE PERSON SERVED: You are served as an individual.
CNS 1428421
Lemon Grove Review
Jan. 28, Feb. 4, 11 & 18, 1997

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE Trustee Sale No. 96-51999 Title Order No. 8901406 Reference No. 975465 APN No. 577-735-05-00 YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST DATED 03/14/94. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. On February 11, 1997, at 10:00 AM, **Professional Foreclosure Corporation** as the duly appointed Trustee under and pursuant to Deed of Trust, recorded on 03/31/94 as Document No. 1994-0213037 Book -- Page -- of Official Records in the Office of the Recorder of SAN DIEGO County, California, executed by: MICHAEL W. SLAVINSKY AND MARIA L. SLAVINSKY, HUSBAND AND WIFE AS JOINT TENANTS, as Trustor, FLEET MORTGAGE CORP., as Beneficiary, WILL SELL AT PUBLIC AUCTION TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER FOR CASH (payable at time of sale in lawful money of the United States, by cash, a cashier's check drawn by a state or national bank, a check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state). At: AT THE SOUTH ENTRANCE TO THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE AT 220 WEST, BROADWAY, SAN DIEGO, CA., all right, title and interest conveyed to and now held by it under said Deed of Trust in the property situated in said County, California describing the land therein: Lot 71 of Blossom Hill, in the City of Lemon Grove, County of San Diego, State of California, According to Map Thereof No. 7607, Filed in the Office of the County Recorder of San Diego County, April 20, 1973. The property heretofore described is being sold "as is". The street address and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 2121 CAMINO DE LAS PALMAS, LEMON GROVE, CA 91945. The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. Said sale will be made, but without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, regarding title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum of the note(s) secured by said Deed of Trust, with interest thereon, as provided in said note(s), advances, if any, under the terms of the Deed of Trust, estimated fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee and of the trusts created by said Deed of Trust, to-wit: $171,510.11 Estimated. Accrued interest and additional advances, if any, will increase this figure prior to sale. The beneficiary under said Deed of Trust heretofore executed and delivered to the undersigned a written Declaration of Default and Demand for Sale, and a written Notice of Default and Election to Sell. The undersigned caused said Notice of Default and Election to Sell to be recorded in the county where the real property is located and more than three months have elapsed since such recordation. **Professional Foreclosure Corporation** as Trustee, 5 Hutton Centre Drive, Suite 1050, Santa Ana, CA 92707, Telephone Number: (714) 432-9000, By: STEPHANIE S. BUSH, TRUSTEE SALE OFFICER, Date: 01/10/97 NPP0024483 PUB: 01/21/97, 01/28/97, 02/04/97

The Lemon Grove Review

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Sports editor: Marv Rosen
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Submissions

Letters, editorial and photo submissions are welcome, but will not be returned to sender unless accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Material can be send via e-mail at the following address: yscmr@adnc.com.

All materials must be received by the Monday preceding the date of publication. The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions.

Advertising

All advertising is subject to current rate card. The publisher reserves the right to reject an advertiser's order.

Only publication of an advertisement shall constitute final acceptance.

Send all correspondence to: Forum Publications, Inc., P.O. Box 127, Lemon Grove, CA 91946

Lemon Grove Almanac

1994 Population:	**25,100**
Incorporated:	**1977**
Area:	**3.75 sq. mi.**
Median income:	**$34,399**
1996-97 city budget:	**$26.3 million**
1996 taxable sales:	**$265 million**
Mayor:	**Mary Teresa Sessom**
Council:	**Thomas Clabby**
	Craig Lake
	Dwight Shelley
	Jeff Jandura
City Manager:	**Doug Yount**
Planning Director:	**Jim Butler**
City Attorney:	**Gloria McLean**
City Clerk:	**Christine Taub**
Sheriff's Capt.:	**Yolanda Collins**
Fire Chief:	**Dale Chamberlain**
Congressional district:	**52nd - Duncan Hunter**
State Senate district:	**40th - Steve Peace**
State Assembly district:	**77th - Steve Baldwin**
Supervisorial district:	**2nd - Dianne Jacob**
High school:	
Libraries:	**1**
Post offices:	**1**
Parks	**4**
Recreation centers	**1**

Lemon Grove's only locally owned and operated newspaper

Friday final day for entering Miss Lemon Grove Pageant

The final day for entering the Miss Lemon Grove Pageant is Friday. Any single female between the ages of 17 (if a senior in high school) and 24 who currently resides in the city of Lemon Grove and has never been a mother is eligible to enter. There is no entry fee, but it requires a commitment of time and dedication.

Those interested should contact the Lemon Grove Chamber of Commerce office at 469-9621 or Judy Koons at 460-9101 for information or for an application.

The chamber will be holding its Miss Lemon Grove Pageant on April 11. The event is a preliminary to the Fairest of the Fair/Miss San Diego County Pageant.

The winner of the Miss Lemon Grove Pageant will serve as the chamber's official hostess for the next year, attending a variety of events such as Old Time Days, Concerts in the Park, business openings and chamber mixers.

The pageants offer the opportunity to win many gifts and prizes from local businesses, not only for the queen, but for all contestants.

Community Notes

Music concert at Shadow Mountain

In conjunction with Christian Heritage College's Homecoming, a benefit concert with contemporary Christian Artist Dennis Agajanian and his band will be held at 6 p.m. on Friday. The concert will be held in the worship center at Shadow Mountain Community Church located at 2100 Greenfield Dr. in El Cajon. A love offering will be taken. For further information on additional homecoming events to be held this weekend, call 590-1750.

Credit counselors offer free classes

For those wanting to get their budget under control, Consumer Credit Counselors of San Diego will be holding a free workshop at 5:30 p.m. on Feb. 13. The workshop is designed to help individuals and families put their finances in order. Trained experts will help by advising how to budget finances and plan for the future. Counseling in eight languages (English, Spanish, Tagalog, French, Chinese, Malaysian, Korean and Italian) will be available.

The workshop will be held at 1161 E. Main St., Suite 102/104.

Consumer Credit Counselors is a non-profit community service organization that educates the public on the wise use of money and credit. For further information call 447-5700.

Lemon Grove Fire Log

Jan. 24, 1997 through Jan. 30, 1997

6800 blk. Federal Blvd. Commercial/industrial fire.
7400 blk. Beryl St. Evaluate for the Sheriff.
Columbus Pl./Lemon Grove Ave. Single engine response.
3600 blk. Hilltop Dr. Person down.
3600 blk. Olive St. Possible Heart.
1900 blk. Berry St. Abdominal pains.
1500 blk. Corta Del Sur. Fall.
3100 blk. Crane St. Chest pains.
1400 blk. La Corta Cir. Medical aid.
Hwy 94 EB/Grove St. Vehicle accident freeway.
3500 blk. Citrus St. Assault victim.
2600 blk. Buena Vista Ave. Difficulty breathing.
Broadway/New Jersey Ave. Vehicle accident.
8000 blk. Lemon Grove Way. Chest pains.
2100 blk. Ensenada St. Assist invalid.
2500 blk. Hardy Dr. Vehicle fire.
Palm St./Skyline Dr. Traffic accident.
2400 blk. New Jersey Ave. Broken leg.
3400 blk. Washington Ave. Chest pains.
8100 blk. Broadway. Difficulty breathing.
7800 blk. Broadway. Person down.
6700 blk. Hibiscus Dr. Vehicle fire.
Blossom Ln./Washington St. Outdoor odor check.
3600 blk. Grove St. Chest pains.
Sweetwater Rd./Palm St. Traffic accident.
Hwy 94 EB/College Ave. Large vehicle fire.
7900 blk. Broadway. Medic alert alarm.
1800 blk. El Dora St. Residential structure fire.
8000 blk. Lemon Grove Way. Chest pains.
8000 blk. Lemon Grove Way. Chest pains.
7000 blk. Casa Ln. Medical aid.

Send your Fictitious Business Statement to

$35! ***The Lemon Grove Review***

Box 127, Lemon Grove, CA 91946

(Why pay the Daily Californian $42?)

Williamson

Continued from Page 1

Nev. Williamson, who had lived at home for the first time.

Williamson's said his early years in the minors were spent with the goal of getting back to San Diego. "You think that one day you're probably going to get a chance to pitch in your home town. If you don't think you're ever going to get to the big leagues, there's no reason to sign a professional contract."

Moves by Padres general manager Jack McKeon soon altered the closer's future, and Williamson was traded. He considered the trade to the Orioles a positive experience. "It was like a new lease on life," he said.

Williamson made the Orioles' opening day roster for the 1987 season. "You get there and you think you're going to be nervous," said Williamson on reaching the big leagues.

Williamson's career ended after eight seasons with the Orioles. He took part in a couple of noteworthy events. The 1988 Orioles started out the season by losing their first 21 games, an American League record, before Williamson got the win over the White Sox.

Williamson was the third of four pitchers in a combined no-hitter pitched in July 1991. The Orioles' pitching feat tied a Major League record for most pitchers used in a no-hitter.

In 1982 Williamson married Lori Benbrook, also out of Mount Miguel High School. The family lives in the Baltimore suburbs with two children: 13-year-old Elliot and 7-year-old Christopher.

When asked the difference between Lemon Grove and suburban Baltimore, Williamson replied "about 70 degrees." It was 28 degrees in Baltimore the day he was being honored here.

Sports Beat
with Greg Eichelberger

Welcome to another edition of "As The Stadium Deal Turns," or "Blackmail," "Deceived" or whatever you want to call it. Let's face it, friends, this is an old-fashioned snake-oil deal and the Spanos' are the slick hucksters selling it to the rubes on the San Diego City Council, who are too drunk with their own power or too afraid of losing a football team to say "no." Well, I'm not afraid.

Who cares if the Super Bowl doesn't come here? Most people can't go to the game, anyway. It's filled with corporate sponsors who cram the seats with rich clients and other undeserving sorts. And that's speaking from the perspective of someone who works in the media and could probably get credentials. But, that doesn't matter. We're just sick to death of the threats and intimidations by uncaring, unfeeling megamillionaires who just want more and more money. Just let it end.

On that subject, Mike Downery of the *L.A. Times* wrote a humorous column (although we're sure he was just as serious at the same time) urging Los Angeles to "grab the NFL title game" for the Rose Bowl or Coliseum, while "San Diegans quibble over money and dawdle over the event." Now on to some brighter topics.

Lemon Grove cyclist Chris Horner, who was featured in last week's *Union-Tribune*, has been chosen as the only American representative to ride for the prestigious 18-man French cycling team, La Francaise des Jeux (The French Players), the number three-ranked professional squad in the world. Not only that, but listen to the fringe benefits he'll receive: all expenses paid, an apartment in Paris and a two-year contract worth over $37,000 a year. "But 174,000 French francs sounds better," he said. Just to ride a bike around. Who knew? All we know is that it's a heck of a way to make a living, but we wish him the best of luck, anyhow.

Here's something that's near and dear to my heart. Remember playing whiffle ball when you were a kid? The way the pitch would sail in all directions like a drunken satellite, almost impossible to hit? Only when you did connect, no one in the field had any idea where the ball was going. Anyway, there was a whiffle ball tournament held this weekend at Crown Point Park, and though we did not attend, we kind of wish that we had. Just for old times sake.

Speaking of obscure sports, the Old Mission Beach Athletic Club (OMBAC) rugby campaign is in full swing. You have to see this game live, and up close to really appreciate it. They play their home games at Robb Field in Mission Beach (the next one is against Life College on Feb. 9 at 1 p.m.), and as soon as we can find an East County connection to all of this (and I will), I'll get a story and photos out right away. Anyone interested in attending the games can call Brian Vizard, at 239-7537 for more information.

A big "Sports Beat" kudo goes to Brandon Fowler, of Valhalla High School, one of the featured athletes in last week's *UT*. The 6-5 junior scored 16 points, pulled down 11 rebounds and had three blocked shots as his Norseman upset the (then) sixth-ranked Helix Highlanders, 48-39. Way t' go, kid.

While talking about the cagers, it seems the men's Aztec team, after starting off so well, has suddenly fallen upon hard times, dropping their last six decisions to move into seventh place in the Pacific Division of the Western Athletic Conference. The reason is simple. Forum hasn't received its full-season credentials yet, and until we do, the skid will continue. Let's see if we can make it clearer. 1996 Padres – we covered, they won the West. 1995-96 Gulls – we covered, they won Taylor Cup. 1996 Sockers – we covered, they made play-offs. 1996 Chargers – we did not cover, they went 8-8. Do the math and you'll see what I'm talking about. The Aztecs women's team, whom we cover, by the way, are currently 12-6 overall, and 7-1 in the WAC.

That's all for this week, although I know you still want more. If you have sports news I can use, just call me at 390-7103 and we'll connect. Until then, have a great sports week.

La Mesa's Glen Tait has been getting courses ready on PGA tour for 20 years

by Norrie West

He has been at it for 20 years now - helping run the PGA Tour. "He" is La Mesa's Glen Tait, a veteran tour official, who has just spent the last week setting up the course for the Buick Invitational that starts Thursday at Torrey Pines Golf course.

Altogether 156 of the world's best players will tee off Thursday on both courses, and, after two days of play, only 70 or so of them will play the final two days on the long south course.

Before they do all of that, however, Tait will determine just how fast the greens will be, where the cups will be placed on each hole, how wide the fairways will be and how low the grass will be cut. As the advance man of the tour officials team that runs all of the tournaments the pros play throughout the year - actually more than 40 - that's his job.

And then, when the Buick begins, he will be the man delegating the other officials to their place on the course. All of them are connected by walkie-talkies so they can deal with rules requests immediately, do not hold up play and also confer on some rulings.

"The greens are in magnificent condition. their speed will be 9 1/2 or 10 on the stimpmeter, which is our measuring tool. That is fast, but not sheer lightning," Tait explained.

He also said that the whole Torrey Pines facility is in marvelous shape, the best he has ever seen it.

Fair weather, he said, will only make it better, especially for the excellent field of golfers, including defending champion Davis Love III, last year's Player of the Year Tom Lehman, and San Diego's Craig Stadler, Phil Mickelson, Scott Simpson, Lennie Clements, Mark Wiebe and, possibly, Jeff Hart.

All of those local players learned their gold right here in the junior program.

The purse is now $1.5 million, which means the winner will get a tidy $270,000 Sunday afternoon.

Tait and his wife Kay have lived in La Mesa for 16 years, and he plays golf at Singing Hills when he is not on the road.

"I'm gone about 30 weeks each year so I don't get to play as much as I would like," said Tait, who is 62 and a top-notch, low handicap player.

"It has been a great experience for me. Lucky to be out here. the players are better year after hear, mostly because of better instruction and four years of college playing," he concluded.

He said he plans to leave the tour in July of 1999.

It will be has second retirement. He spent 25 years in the Marine Corps, and retired in 1975 as a major, having worked up to that rank from enlisted status.

Checking out the 18th hole at Torrey Pines, site of the Buick Invitational Golf Tournament set for this weekend. is Glen Tait of La Mesa. Tait determines the way the courses will play on the PGA tour events.

Photo by Norrie West

Send us your sports news!

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East County baseball pitcher makes it to the Major League

by Greg Eichelberger

Tom Fordham, a 1992 graduate of Granite Hills High School, is on the verge of making a lifelong dream of playing in the Major Leagues a reality.

The 6-2, 210-pound, left-handed pitcher was signed by the Chicago White Sox organization after a season at Grossmont Community College, in which he compiled a 7-5, with an earned run average of 2.26 and five shutouts.

But it took a lot of hard work, a positive mindset, and much convincing of coaches skeptical of his rather avant-garde work habits, to get this far.

Moving up through the Chicago farm system, he has made stops in Florida, North Carolina, Indiana, Virginia Alabama and finally, last year, Nashville, the club's AAA team, where he had an 11-7 mark and an ERA of 3.35, with a two-to-one strikeout-to-walk ratio.

There's only one place to go from this level, and that's to the friendly confines of Cominsky Park on the south side of the Windy City, and a chance to join other Sox greats of the past such as Nellie Fox, Minnie Minoso, Wilbur Wood, Hoyt Wilhelm and Ted Lyons, as well as to play with some possible future Hall of Famers like Frank Thomas, Albert Belle and Robin Ventura.

Fordham said that he felt pretty confident about making the (big league) team this year. He was in town last week to participate in the 14th annual East County Baseball Camp at El Capitan High School.

"I feel I've made the right adjustments and am mentally

Tom Fordham

prepared to do what it takes to play for the Sox," he added.

It's not known yet whether he would be a starter, or come out of the bullpen. "It doesn't matter much to me." he confessed.

Born in El Cajon in 1974 to Al and Marcy (he also has an older brother, Patrick), he played in the Little League system until high school, where he made the varsity squad his sophomore year. Under the tutelage of legendary Granite Hills skipper, Gordy Thompson, his true colors began to show.

"He had a laid-back work ethic that I could never figure out," said Thompson. "And he was a free spirit, to say the least. But after overcoming some early problems, he began to show some real talent, and established himself as one of the best pitchers in the county."

Thompson related how Fordham helped lead the team to the CIF semifinal in 1992, claiming that was one of the best squads he had ever coached.

Including Fordham, there have been over 30 young men who've signed professional baseball contracts over the years who played for Thompson. Shane Spencer (Yankees), Brian Graham and Brian Giles (Indians) are among them.

Fordham credits the teaching of Thompson and later, Grossmont College coach, Ed Olson, with the molding of his talent, drive and desire into a positive force that has allowed him to make it this far.

"When I was younger, I always dreamed of having a big league career, but it really wasn't until I made the varsity that I knew I had a shot. Then, when I pitched for Ed at Grossmont, I knew I had a very good chance."

Steve Vickery, the helmsman of the El Cap Vaqueros, a team that met Fordham's Eagles on many occasions, recalls the hurler as an outstanding competitor that didn't look like an overpowering thrower, but could will himself to win games, which he did often.

"Now he works hard all the time, is a true pitcher with fantastic mechanics and has a great shot to make the White Sox," he said.

"We're very excited for him," his mother said. "He's doing much better than we expected and I look forward to seeing him play in Chicago. That will be quite a thrill."

Now that Fordham has almost attained the acme of the game, has he developed a Major League ego?

"I hope not," he said. "I'm just the same person as I always was. I have a God-given talent that I'm grateful for, and wherever I go, I know it's because of that. I don't believe I have an attitude or anything like that."

He then proved that last statement by instructing a 9-year-old how to improve his fast ball at the baseball clinic in which he was taking part.

"This is what it's all about," he said, pointing to the local kids surrounding him who still get a kick out of the game. "That's why I keep coming back here to do what I do."

He added, "Who knows, maybe there's a potential Major Leaguer here who just needs a little confidence and motivation to get him over the top?"

Little League offices ransacked

The Auxiliary Coordinator for the La Mesa American Little League reported that thieves broke into the offices last month and stole the league computer, sound system, microwave, coffee maker and cash register.

Coordinator Steve Kretz noted that this hurts the league effort to provide an outlet of beautiful activity and training under good leadership in an atmosphere of wholesome community participation.

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